

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 38, line 33, to read as follows:

a4 sub B1 Constructs 90, 92, 94, 96, 100, 102, 104, and 106 can be incorporated into absorbent articles. Generally, absorbent articles 110, 112, 114, 116, 120, 122, 124, and 126, shown in FIGURES 25A through 25H, respectively, include a liquid pervious facing sheet 52 and a liquid impervious backing sheet 54 and constructs 90, 92, 94, 96, 100, 102, 104, and 106, respectively. In such absorbent articles, the facing sheet is joined to the backing sheet. The absorbent articles can further include leg gathers (53).

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 33-40, and 46, and add new Claims 53 and 54 as shown below.

a5 sub B2 1. (Amended) An absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

a6 sub B1 3. (Amended) The composite of Claim 1 wherein the composite contains a width and a length and wherein the bands are continuous along the composite's length in the machine direction.

a7 sub B3 33. (Amended) A wetlaid absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

34. (Amended) A foam-formed absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more

bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

35. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising an absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

36. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising a wetlaid absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

37. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising a foam-formed absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

38. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising:

a liquid pervious facing sheet;

a storage layer comprising an absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers; and

a liquid impervious backing sheet.

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cont

39. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising:

a liquid pervious facing sheet;

an acquisition layer for rapidly acquiring and distributing liquid;

a storage layer comprising an absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers; and

a liquid impervious backing sheet.

40. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising:

a liquid pervious facing sheet;

an acquisition layer for rapidly acquiring and distributing liquid;

a storage layer comprising an absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers;

an intermediate layer interposed between the acquisition layer and the storage layer; and

a liquid impervious backing sheet.

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46. (Amended) An absorbent article comprising:

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a liquid pervious facing sheet;

an acquisition layer for acquiring and distributing liquid;

a storage layer; and

a liquid impervious backing sheet;

wherein the acquisition layer comprises an absorbent composite comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in

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cont two or more bands, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

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Sub 35 53. (New) An absorbent composite, comprising a fibrous matrix and absorbent material, wherein the absorbent material is present in the fibrous matrix in two or more bands, wherein the bands swell and form a fluted structure upon contact with liquid, wherein the regions between the bands comprise liquid distribution zones in the fibrous matrix, and wherein the fibrous matrix comprises bonded cellulosic fibers.

Sub C1 54. (New) The composite of Claim 53, wherein the composite has a width and a length and wherein the bands and liquid distribution zones alternate across the composite's width and extend along the composite's length.

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